

2012 NP & PA Salary Survey Results

A big increase for PA salary, but just a nudge for NPs

Unlike the falling salary numbers of 2011, nurse practitioners and physician assistants have regained momentum, reporting increased salaries and hourly wages across the board. In 2012, one profession made significant gains over last year's wages.

The 2012 National Salary Survey of NPs & PAs found that the average full-time salary for PAs increased more than \$7,000. NP salaries rose by less than half that amount, with an increase of about \$2,500.

The results were particularly impressive for PAs given the decrease in salary the profession experienced from 2010 to 2011. During that period, the average salary for PAs dropped by \$2,006. In just 2 years, PAs saw an overall increase of \$5,289. NPs earned an average of \$2,262 more in 2012 compared to 2010, with a dip of \$187 in 2011.

Survey Methods

We conducted our annual survey using an online questionnaire created with software from Zarca Interactive, a Virginia-based company specializing in online data collection. The survey was live from June 1 through Oct. 31, 2012.

The 2012 survey drew a larger response than our two previous surveys in 2011 and 2010. We collected 4,851 responses from 3,723 nurse practitioners and 1,128 physician assistants.

Full-Time Salaries

In 2012, the average physician assistant working full time earned a salary of \$102,165 and the average nurse practitioner working full time earned \$93,032 (Table 1).

For PAs, this change marks a \$7,295 increase over 2011 average wages of \$94,870. NPs also saw an increase in 2012, earning \$2,449 more than the 2011 average full-time salary of \$90,583.

Although both professions experienced an increase in salary, PAs continued to outearn NPs in 2012, with a difference of \$9,133 for full-time practice. In 2011, this difference was \$4,287.

Table 1

Average Full-Time Salaries and Part-Time Rates

2012 Nurse Practitioner Salaries Over Time, 2003–2012

2012 results based on 3,723 NP responses

	2012	2011	2010	2009*	2007*	2005*	2003*
Average full-time salary	\$93,032	\$90,583	\$90,770	\$89,579	\$81,397	\$74,812	\$69,203
Average part-time hourly rate	\$48.49	\$47.63	\$43.77	\$45.85	\$40.32	\$36.80	\$33.89

*Source: The National Salary Survey of Nurse Practitioners, conducted biennially by ANANNC for Nurse Practitioners, 2001–2009.

2012 Physician Assistant Salaries Over Time, 2003–2012

2012 results based on 1,128 PA responses

	2012	2011	2010	2009*	2007*	2005*	2003*
Average full-time salary	\$102,165	\$94,870	\$96,876	\$93,105	\$86,214	\$81,129	\$76,039
Average part-time hourly rate	\$55.16	\$50.52	\$51.11	--	--	--	--

*Source: American Academy of Physician Assistants National Physician Assistant Census Reports.

Table 2

Gender Breakdown

Nurse Practitioner Salary by Gender

Gender	2012 Salary	2011 Salary	Change
Male (8.79% of respondents)	\$103,394	\$97,329	+6.23%
Female (91.21% of respondents)	\$91,613	\$89,933	+1.86%
Salary Difference	\$11,781 or 12.86%	\$7,396 or 8.2%	

Physician Assistant Salary by Gender

Gender	2012 Salary	2011 Salary	Change
Male (43.38% of respondents)	\$106,833	\$102,222	+4.56%
Female (56.62% of respondents)	\$97,002	\$88,895	+9.12%
Salary Difference	\$9,881 or 10.19%	\$13,327 or 15%	

[Click to view larger graphic.](#)

Part-Time Rates

The 2012 National Salary Survey of NPs & PAs also collected information on the hourly rates paid for part-time positions (Table 1). In 2012, the average physician assistant working part time earned an hourly wage of \$55.16, an increase of \$4.64 per hour over 2011.

Nurse practitioners also received an increase in hourly pay, though it was less significant than that for PAs. In 2012, NPs working part time earned an hourly wage of \$48.49, an 86-cent increase over 2011's average rate.

Physician assistants working part time outearned nurse practitioners by \$6.67.

Gender Gap

In both professions, men still earn more than women in both full-time salary and hourly wages (Table 2). For PAs, the gender gap narrowed in 2012, with men earning \$106,833 to women's \$97,002. The difference is \$9,881 or 10.19%, compared to \$13,327 or 15% in 2011.

PAs who are women reported the highest increase in salary among all respondents.

Physician assistants who are women earned \$8,107 more in 2012 than in 2011, a 9.12% increase. Physician assistants who are men earned \$4,661 more in 2012, a 1.15% increase.

NPs who are women also earned more last year, but they were outearned by their male counterparts by \$11,781 or 12.86%, a wider gap than the year before.

In 2011, the difference between salaries for men and for women was \$7,396 or 8.2%. In 2012, NPs who are women earned an average of \$91,613, a 1.86% increase over 2011. NPs who are men earned \$103,394, an increase of 6.23% over 2012.

The gender difference documented in the 2012 survey is linked to the demographics of the professions. Of the 1,128 physician assistant respondents, 57% were women and 43% were men. Of the 3,723 nurse practitioner respondents, 91% were women and 9% were men.

Table 3
Demographic Overview

Nurse Practitioner Data Overview

	2012	2011	Change
Number of years in practice as an NP	9.3	9.3	No change
Annual full-time base salary	\$93,032	\$90,583	+2.7%
Part-time hourly rate	\$48.49	\$47.63	+1.8%
Number of patients each week	62.24	64.95	-4.17%
OTC recommendations per week	27.7	28.61	-3.18%
Prescriptions written per week	66.42	69.19	-4.00%

Physician Assistant Data Overview

	2012	2011	Change
Number of years in practice as an PA	12.37	11.87	+4.21%
Annual full-time base salary	\$102,165	\$94,870	+7.69%
Part-time hourly rate	\$55.16	\$50.52	+9.18%
Number of patients each week	74.07	80.47	-7.95%
OTC recommendations per week	35.37	33.10	+6.86%
Prescriptions written per week	83.75	78.71	+6.40%

Click to view larger graphic.

What's Next?

We will share additional data from the 2012 National Salary Survey of NPs & PAs on our website in coming months.

Visit our site often to view and download detailed reports on salary by practice setting, geographic location, academic degree and more.

To receive notification of these focused reports as they become available, sign up for our free newsletter using the form posted in the upper right corner of our homepage at www.advanceweb.com/NPPA.